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Chairman: Mr. Erdös ..... (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 64 to 84 (*continued*)

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Dos Santos (Mozambique): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that with your able guidance, expertise and outstanding diplomatic experience our deliberations will be crowned with success. I would also like to extend my delegation's congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. The delegation of the Republic of Mozambique wishes to assure you of its full support and cooperation as you discharge your important responsibilities.

Allow me also to wholeheartedly congratulate the Secretary-General and the United Nations on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. This is clear recognition of the outstanding role being played by the United Nations under the able leadership of the Secretary-General in international efforts to achieve peace and security in the world. We are very proud to be part of this family of nations.

The First Committee's session is informed this year by reports on the disturbing uncertainty over the maintenance of peace, security and disarmament in the world. Despite the extraordinary positive developments in the field of banning anti-personnel landmines and in tackling the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction continue to pose serious threats to mankind, with no progress in negotiations to reduce or limit them.

Last year, world leaders committed themselves, through the Millennium Declaration, to spare no effort to free our people from the scourge of war, whether within or between States, and to seek to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. We believe that the priority task of this session of the First Committee should be to translate this bold political commitment of our leaders into deeds.

Our first major concern is the persistence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the world. These weapons, which are a sad legacy of the cold war, are still kept, based on a rationale that not only is outdated but that also carries the potential for an arms race, given the insecurity they cause to those States unfortunate enough to be within their range.

In 2000, we applauded the successful conclusion of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with the adoption of the relevant plan of action. We had hoped that, through the plan's agreed 13 practical steps, the days of the scourge of nuclear weapons would be numbered, as nuclear-weapon States agreed to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament. For the first time in 15 years, States parties were able to reach an historic consensus and

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establish an international standard for nuclear disarmament and the curbing of nuclear proliferation. We are seriously concerned that there is no movement in the implementation of this agenda.

Moreover, we have not seen tangible progress in the area of nuclear testing, although the moratorium appears to be holding. A definite ban on nuclear testing still awaits universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), particularly the key ratifications by all nuclear States. We are also deeply concerned about the possible abrogation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which will endanger international peace and security, as well as the strategic balance, and we express our profound apprehension over plans for new missile defence systems likely to spark a new arms race.

The threat of chemical and biological weapons remains high at a moment when we have experienced horrendous terrorist acts. We are far from the conclusion of the negotiations to ban the production of fissile material. No substantive progress has been achieved in establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones, and the Conference on Disarmament has yet to reach consensus on its agenda.

Landmines continue to be a matter of concern to my Government, because they continue to kill, maim and threaten the lives of innocent people in many countries of the world, including my own country.

We welcome the entry into force of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction as a clear sign of the determination of the international community to free the world of these deadly weapons. The Third Meeting of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention, recently held in Managua, reaffirmed the States parties' unwavering commitment to the total eradication of anti-personnel landmines and addressed the insidious and inhumane effects of these weapons.

The growing number of States parties to the Convention and the steady decrease in countries producing or using landmines, as well as the increase in cleared land, underscore the vitality of the fight against these deadly devices. However, we must highlight that we are still far from our ultimate objective of universal accession to the Convention in order to ensure the total and complete ban of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of landmines. I take this opportunity to appeal to all States that are not yet parties to adhere to the Convention.

Mozambique continues to play its role in combating landmines. We have registered significant progress in mine clearance, with more than 5 million square metres of land cleared and reclaimed for productive purposes. On the other hand, we have just concluded the survey of stockpiled landmines, totalling 38,000 mines. Our commitment is to conclude the destruction of all stockpiled mines by 2003, thus complying with the provisions of the Ottawa Convention.

The illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons has always been at the top of my Government's agenda. We are pleased with the adoption by consensus last July of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. This document provides the much needed international framework for comprehensive action to tackle this threat to peace and security in the world. Through its realistic, integrated and action-oriented approach, the Programme of Action is undoubtedly the best option at this point for concerted efforts towards curbing the destabilizing accumulation and easy availability of small arms and light weapons.

The high-level participation and the expression of commitment made during the Conference and the complex yet fruitful negotiations on the draft Programme of Action, as well as the ongoing efforts at the regional and subregional levels, are a solid foundation upon which to build future action. It was for me and my country a privilege and honour to have contributed towards the success of the Conference.

The time has now come for the international community to act. We must ensure the full and speedy implementation of the Programme of Action so as to give effect to the commitment made by our leaders, during the Millennium Summit, to end the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in the world. The implementation of the Programme of Action will require political will, international cooperation and resources. Developing countries will need international cooperation and assistance to design and implement effective programmes for the collection, disposal and destruction of illicit small arms and light weapons. Failure to implement the Programme of Action will

only perpetuate the current suffering endured by humanity, and mainly by women, children and the elderly.

We have shown that when we have the determination to succeed, we can and do succeed. We have made the first steps and we should now proceed together, in cooperation and understanding. We in Mozambique are committed to this noble goal.

Comprehensive disarmament and the maintenance of peace and security in the world need to be addressed at the global level, through multilateral negotiations and agreements. In this exercise, the United Nations has a fundamental role to play as the guardian of peace and stability. The critical role of the United Nations was highlighted by the world leaders again in the Millennium Declaration, when they reiterated their faith in the Organization and its Charter as the indispensable foundations for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

The United Nations, through its universal membership and experience, is the appropriate institution for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, particularly those provisions related to peace, security and disarmament. We welcome the Secretary-General's recent Road map report for the implementation of that important declaration, and we endorse the course of action proposed in it.

Mozambique is fully committed to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and calls upon all Member States to endorse the proposed Road map and provide the necessary resources to make it operational. The Secretary-General has just shown us the right path for peace, security and disarmament. It is now time for us to join hands and act decisively.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): At the outset, I should like to express on behalf of my delegation and myself our warm congratulations to you on your assumption of the office of Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that under your skilful and able leadership, our deliberations will reach a fruitful outcome. My congratulations also go to all other members of the Bureau for their well-deserved election. I should also like to pay my tribute to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs for his very useful overview.

I had the honour to speak on behalf of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on 9 October. However, allow me to highlight briefly some issues that are of particular interest to Myanmar.

At the Millennium Summit, our leaders demonstrated collective political will by pledging to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. To achieve this aim, they also expressed their willingness to consider the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating the nuclear danger. The important task for the international community is to translate these important commitments into reality.

We strongly believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. At the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we were heartened by the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of the nuclear arsenal, leading to nuclear disarmament. We have great expectations that these undertakings will be transformed into reality in the near future.

We are of the view that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament. This has motivated Myanmar, together with other ASEAN countries, to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia.

We cannot stress enough the importance of the signature and ratification of the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba by all regional States. The signature and ratification of the relevant Protocols to those Treaties by the nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so are also very crucial. In this context, we welcome and continue our support for the initiatives taken by Mongolia on single-State nuclear-weapon-free status.

The universality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons would greatly contribute to our goals of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We look forward to participating in the forthcoming

Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in New York. We are encouraged that three nuclear-weapon States have ratified that important Treaty. We hope that the remaining nuclear-weapon-States, as well as those States identified in the Treaty's annex 2, will follow suit. We will also have the golden opportunity next year to review the implementation of the agreed practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the NPT in the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

Myanmar has consistently called for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The setbacks that we have encountered in the past 12 months — the failure of negotiations on the protocol on the Biological Weapons Convention, lack of consensus in the Conference on Disarmament and delay in the entry into force of the CTBT — make the convening of the special session more urgent. This would enable us to review and assess our principles and priorities, as well as the formats of negotiations and forums for our future disarmament agenda.

I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Camilo Reyes of Colombia for his achievements during the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. My congratulations also go to Ambassador Carlos dos Santos of Mozambique for his excellent chairmanship of the preparatory process. We now have a Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Although the outcome is not totally satisfactory to us all, it is a good beginning. We must make good use of the forthcoming Review Conference to take more effective measures to address the remaining two core issues: strict control of private ownership and prevention of the transfer of small arms to non-state actors.

We continue to believe that the Conference on Disarmament is the single multilateral negotiating forum for all relevant disarmament matters. The continued impasse in the Conference on Disarmament damages the creditability of that important forum. We regret that the Conference on Disarmament was unable to establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament. We call on all members of the Conference on Disarmament to show political will and greater flexibility in addressing this crucial issue.

The preservation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is crucial to the maintenance and promotion of strategic stability. The Treaty serves as the cornerstone in this regard. It also contributes to further reductions of strategic offensive weapons. We are in favour of a comprehensive approach towards missiles in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner. We look forward to the summit between the President of the Russian Federation and the President of the United States in the near future and hope that that meeting will provide an important impetus to the process of disarmament.

Since 1995, Myanmar has tabled a resolution on nuclear disarmament. We would like to express our deep appreciation to our co-sponsors and to the delegations that have supported the resolution. We will table a resolution on this subject again this year. I would like to request all delegations to give their favourable consideration to it.

During the next four weeks, we shall be deliberating issues that are central to global peace and security. Your role, Mr. Chairman, is crucial to the success of our endeavours. My delegation pledges our full cooperation to you so that the work of this Committee will result in a successful outcome.

Mr. El Kadiri (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I am pleased, on behalf of the Kingdom of Morocco, to extend to you, Sir, my sincere congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I am convinced that your vast experience, your deep understanding of the issues on our agenda and your receptiveness are the best guarantors of the success of our work. I can assure you of my delegation's full cooperation towards a successful session.

We also compliment your predecessor, the Ambassador of Myanmar, who brilliantly led the work of our Committee at last year's session.

I take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for his ongoing support on issues of security and disarmament and for his very interesting statement at the opening of the Committee's general debate.

The delegation of Morocco also offers its warmest congratulations to Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to this Organization and to him personally.

Our work at this session is taking place in the particularly sombre context of the tragic events of 11 September. The impact of those events, which is still very deeply felt, will certainly have a bearing on issues of international security and disarmament. The terrorist attacks against innocent civilians deeply shocked the entire international community, which was unanimous in its unequivocal condemnation. I wish here to reiterate the sincere condolences of the Government and the people of Morocco to the bereaved families and to the Government of the United States.

It is clear that those tragic events concern the international community, which must draw the necessary lessons from them. It must step up its efforts and focus its endeavours on finding the appropriate means to meet the present challenges to international security. The events cast light on the drawbacks of a unilateral approach to security and demonstrated the need to strengthen multilateral instruments related to international security and disarmament.

We are gratified by the spirit of cooperation and compassion demonstrated throughout the world in reaction to the 11 September attacks. We hope that this manifestation of solidarity and shared destiny will prove to be a catalyst for future international action and will provide an opportunity to restructure the often unilateral guidelines that have prevailed in the sphere of security and disarmament.

At the core of this Committee's concerns and priorities must be the search for new definitions of security that would emphasize its social, economic and cultural aspects and for new disarmament practices based on multilateral principles of equity and justice. Moreover, the international community must take action to bolster existing mechanisms and instruments and to set out a specific timetable for the successive stages of general disarmament and for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction — nuclear, chemical and biological — in particular. Here, we believe that the contribution of civil-society actors — especially researchers, academics, experts and non-governmental organizations — would strengthen the sense of a community of interests among States in a world that is growing increasingly interdependent.

Looking at the general situation of disarmament throughout the world, we see a mixed picture which is characterized simultaneously by progress and by slowdowns — indeed, by regression, which is a source of concern.

We cannot fail to welcome the significant efforts made to date in the area of arms control and disarmament. These include: the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the encouraging decisions taken at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT; the adoption of the Convention banning chemical weapons; and the recent adoption of the Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. But it is most disappointing to note that several multilateral disarmament initiatives have remained unrealized or face an uncertain future. A number of examples are: the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which has not yet entered into force; the work of the Conference on Disarmament, which has been stalled by divergent views about its programme of work; negotiations on a protocol to the Biological Weapons Convention; and the commitment made during the 2000 NPT Review Conference by nuclear-weapon States to adopt practical disarmament measures, which has yet to be fulfilled.

Morocco recalls that it supports bilateral efforts; it is particularly gratified by agreements between the great Powers aimed at substantial reductions in their respective nuclear arsenals. We hope that those agreements will enter into force very soon and that they will be followed by further efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. But the key objective of complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament must be the object of multilateral instruments involving all States.

Morocco views disarmament as an essential element in conflict prevention, the building of international peace and security and the advancement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries. We have therefore remained committed to general and complete disarmament with respect both to weapons of mass destruction and to conventional weapons.

Morocco was among the first to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It attaches the highest importance to nuclear disarmament and non-

proliferation, and supports all initiatives to attain the objectives of the NPT. In its very first paragraph, the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed the relevance of universal adherence to the Treaty as the best way to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. It appealed unambiguously to all States not parties to the NPT to accede to it promptly and without condition.

Moreover, the nuclear Powers on that occasion undertook an unequivocal commitment to adopt practical disarmament measures under article VI of the Treaty with a view to eliminating their nuclear arsenals. While welcoming this, Morocco believes that it is time to fulfil that commitment, which would bolster confidence-building measures between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States.

Those matters will be considered at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. We hope that the elements of a solution will be found within the context of the 2005 Review Conference.

The Kingdom of Morocco believes that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is an effective international legal instrument that can put an end to nuclear proliferation, contribute to nuclear disarmament and thus strengthen international peace and security. In the light of the delayed entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, Morocco appeals to all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. The long delay in the entry into force of that important instrument has been regrettable and runs counter to our desire for a world free of ail nuclear threats. Thus, it is necessary to convene the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in order to study the obstacles and to identify the right way to overcome them.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones helps strengthen regional and international peace and security, contributes to the achievement of nuclear disarmament and bolsters the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The 2000 NPT Review Conference supported the establishment of new zones where they do not yet exist, such as in the Middle East.

While welcoming the initiatives that have led to the establishment of such zones, such as the Treaty of Pelindaba for Africa, Morocco is committed to making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The establishment of such a zone would be both a disarmament and a nuclear non-proliferation measure. This requires that the only State of the region that has yet to accede to the NPT — Israel — should become a State party to the Treaty and submit its nuclear installations to the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Here, Israel must shoulder its historic responsibility and be aware of the fundamental importance of the creation of such a zone. So, too, the nuclear Powers, which undertook clear commitments on this matter during the 1995 Conference, which indefinitely extended the NPT, must make maximum efforts to achieve an objective as basic as that of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The Moroccan delegation is gratified to note an increase in the number of States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Efforts must be continued to implement as quickly as possible the universality of this important legal instrument for disarmament.

In addition, the dynamic action of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), in a context characterized by a slowdown in disarmament efforts, deserves our full encouragement. Financial constraints facing the Organization which are more and more pressing, are likely to slow down this momentum and to reduce its activities at a time when, more than ever, it needs the support of its member States.

Morocco would like specifically to stress the importance of providing international assistance and cooperation as a major element under the Convention, in accordance with articles 10 and 11. Indeed, the exchange of experience and the promotion of bilateral and multilateral agreements on international cooperation are appropriate means that can assist in implementing the objectives of the Convention.

Morocco believes that reductions in military budgets and conventional weapons are a critical objective that allows for the reallocation of the resources released to economic and social development.

As a backer of international regulations on the trafficking of light weapons, particularly through the adoption of a legally binding international instrument, Morocco participated in the United Nations Conference

on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 9 to 20 July 2001, where a Programme of Action was adopted to combat this global scourge. We will be following with great interest the stages of its implementation, particularly as regards Africa, which is very much affected by the illicit trade in light weapons. We welcome the moratoriums on trade in small arms declared by African States, which are participating in efforts aimed at conflict prevention and at peace-building on our African continent.

Regarding the issue of anti-personnel mines, Morocco would like to recall that it unconditionally adheres to the humanitarian principles and purposes contained in the provisions of the Ottawa Convention. My country, which has participated in the entire process of drawing up this Convention, will continue actively to contribute to the continuing de-mining actions and will support the campaigns emerging at the regional level, particularly on the African continent.

Despite the indivisible nature of Euro-Mediterranean security and despite the promises of partnership that have been reiterated on many occasions, the Mediterranean, as a recent declaration of the European Parliament declared, has become a zone that is a microcosm of the principal contradictions of the twenty-first century and is likely to produce irreversible demographic, economic, political and cultural divisions.

At the crossroads of three continents, the Mediterranean is in a state of constant tension and must cope with major political, economic, ecological and demographic challenges, let alone a host of global social scourges that affect this region. To meet those challenges, the countries of the Mediterranean basin have no choice other than to coordinate their policies within a framework of collective, cooperative approaches taken in solidarity. The social ills with which the Mediterranean region is saturated should not be seen as giving rise to a major strategic risk between the two shores of the Mediterranean, thereby justifying highly defensive policies or a retreat to isolationism for security reasons. Quite the contrary — in order to pinpoint the causes and reduce the effects of this entire set of phenomena that threaten the region's security, they must be considered as a result of poverty and of the development gap between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Indeed, there are numerous security problems that now appear as security issues but began as a result of the economic and social divisions and political or cultural intolerance. In this context, it is important to recall the message of His Late Majesty King Hassan II, who said it would be an illusion to believe that, even when peace was once again restored to the Middle East and the Balkans, this would suffice to allow the Mediterranean to regain its historic mission of trade, interpenetration and movement of all kinds, things which have contributed to its historic legacy. There must also be parallel efforts to deal with the economic and social disparity, these difficult and growing disparities that exist throughout the Mediterranean region.

It is in the same spirit that Morocco sets as one of its essential priorities in the area of security and disarmament the building a Maghreb regional group. It would serve as a guarantee of stability and a confidence-building measure for the States of the region, which must devote the thrust of their efforts to economic and social development.

It must be recalled here that the loyal and effective commitment of States to general and complete disarmament must serve to assist their access to sophisticated technology designed for peaceful purposes, with due respect for their choices linked to social and economic development.

Finally, it is of interest to note that the multilateral practice of this Committee seems to have led to the creation of a specific lexicon for the disarmament process with the repeated usage of such concepts as irreversibility, unconditional commitment, confidence-building measures, prevention, flexibility, follow-up, consensus and so forth. We welcome this development in terms of words, but we believe that it must be accompanied by similar and irreversible development and facts.

Mr. Jalang'o (Kenya): Mr. Chairman, let me begin by congratulating you upon your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee during this session. Your worthy qualities, rich experience and diplomatic acumen will no doubt steer our work to very fruitful conclusions. Let me take this opportunity also to congratulate the other members of the Bureau upon their election.

Allow me to extend the thanks of my delegation to the United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, and his team in the Department for Disarmament Affairs for the indefatigable manner

in which they have continued to discharge their responsibility in the quest for greater security and in the cause of disarmament. The statement delivered by the Under-Secretary-General on the opening day of this debate was an eloquent testimony to the commitment and seriousness with which the Department has continued to discharge its obligations.

On behalf of my delegation, I also take this opportunity to express happiness and joy with the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and indeed the United Nations. It is all the more reason why this Committee should endeavour to break new ground in security and disarmament issues, having been so charged by the Secretary-General himself, for the general good of humanity.

The world is still gripped by vivid pictures of the events of 11 September, when terrorists struck in New York and Washington, D.C. The cruel hand of terror took away thousands of lives that morning and destroyed billions of dollars worth of assets.

While Kenya immediately condemned those cowardly and heinous acts and conveyed condolences and sympathy to the victims and their families and to the people and the Government of the United States of America, I wish to reiterate our sentiments once more. Kenya knows only too well the horror of the callous hand of terrorism, having been the victim of a similar attack in 1998, when the American Embassy in Nairobi was bombed by terrorists. Two hundred and twenty-four Kenyan and American lives were lost. Many more were left with severed limbs and ugly scars. There are now empty spaces in Nairobi where once stood solid and beautiful buildings. We note that the events of 11 September have galvanized concerted efforts to tackle the problem of terrorism through a consistent, sustained and comprehensive campaign. Guided by the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, Kenya stands firmly in support of measures to deal with the menace.

The events of 11 September bring into sharp focus the need to agree on measures to check the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and eventually to eliminate them. We share the concern of the Secretary-General, which he voiced in his speech of 1 October, that indeed the events of 11 September could have caused a loss of life of even more horrific proportions if more deadly means had been within the reach of, and used by, the terrorists.

There is therefore a need to urgently ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. We believe that the international community should work for the universalization of the various multilateral conventions and other legal instruments which have been elaborated on these weapons.

Kenya is a State party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and is committed to the eradication of such weapons. In this respect, the Government has, inter alia, appropriately established a national authority which serves as the focal point on matters relating to the Convention, including at the subregional level. A database has also been established on relevant chemicals and substances. Besides these measures, the Government intends to enact legislation which notably will control the movement and handling of scheduled chemical substances.

Last year, the 2000 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted 13 steps aimed at reducing and eventually eliminating the threat posed by nuclear weapons. Since then there has been no progress towards the implementation of these steps, which had been agreed upon. The three States which were outside the Treaty have not acceded to it. It is imperative that all States join international treaties aimed at enhancing the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and eventually eliminating them.

Last year, this Committee endorsed the importance of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABM) as the cornerstone of global strategic stability. My delegation holds most strongly to this position. It is for this reason that we deem any unilateral measure which would diminish the importance of the ABM Treaty a threat to global security and stability. Such measures would inevitably result in a new arms race, including the placing of systems and arms in outer space. The arms race that this could ignite would be multidimensional. It is for these reasons that my delegation calls for the preservation and enhancement of the current global strategic balance through the honouring of the provisions of the ABM Treaty. Such a posture is necessary for the implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III.

Kenya, like other delegations, particularly those that are members of the Conference on Disarmament, is deeply concerned that for the third year running, the Conference has not been able to agree on a programme of work. It has not done any substantive work during these three years.

The Conference has for a considerable time been expected to undertake substantive work with a view to elaborating legally binding international instruments on disarmament. For instance, the General Assembly has in various resolutions over the years urged the Conference to carry out such negotiations. During its fifty-fifth session, the Assembly adopted at least four different resolutions, which, inter alia, called on the Conference to negotiate a treaty on nuclear disarmament.

As the sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations, the Conference cannot afford to continue losing time. There are several important issues on its agenda, ranging from nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to new weapons of mass destruction. These are crucial elements for international peace and security and therefore should be addressed as a matter of priority.

We appreciate the fact that during its 2001 session, the Conference, in an attempt to find a way forward, appointed three Special Coordinators — for review of its agenda, expansion of its membership, and improved and effective functioning — to look into certain aspects of its work. Despite these efforts, the Conference was still not able to reach a consensus on any of the issues relating to the three areas.

Subsequently, in its report for this year, the Conference recommends the reappointment of the Special Coordinators as early as possible in its 2002 session. Whereas such a step is welcome in principle, it must be borne in mind that this exercise is not real work and should therefore not be allowed to divert attention from substantive work.

We realize that the paralysis in the Conference is due to a number of factors. These include the lack of political will on the part of some Member States to negotiate on certain agenda items. Others are strategic issues which are extraneous to the Conference. The States concerned should realize, however, that their unwillingness to engage in negotiations will only deepen the crisis in the Conference. Its vocation as the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament issues has already been compromised. The international community will have even less faith in it. The Conference on Disarmament must thus be revived promptly.

The establishment by the Secretary-General of a panel of experts to look into the issue of missiles is a very welcome development. Missiles as delivery systems have a direct bearing on global and strategic stability, and, indeed, have been cited as a factor in the creeping ABM Treaty problem. We look forward to receiving the report of these experts at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Finally, my delegation would like to turn to an area in which positive achievement has been recorded. In July last year, the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects ended with the adoption of a Programme of Action.

My delegation would like to thank Ambassador Carlos dos Santos of Mozambique once again for his painstaking efforts in steering the work of the Preparatory Committee, which gave us the final working document. My delegation also thanks Ambassador Camilio Reyes for skilfully guiding the Conference in its concluding stages. As noted then, the African Group painfully agreed to the deletion of aspects dealing with the private possession of weapons and the supply of arms to non-State actors, yielding to the opposition of a single State. It is hoped that the events of 11 September will tilt the balance towards the serious consideration and incorporation of these vital and crucial aspects in the Programme of Action in the future. Above all, my delegation looks forward to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

In this vein, Kenya thanks the Secretary-General and the Department for Disarmament Affairs for dispatching a fact-finding mission to Kenya in July-August this year, with the objective of collecting relevant data on the magnitude of the problem of illicit small arms in Kenya, the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. Kenya has associated itself with its report and looks forward to practical cooperation in confronting the menace.

Mr. Kasemsarn (Thailand): On behalf of the delegation of Thailand, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that under your leadership and guidance the First Committee will indeed fulfil its tasks during these

difficult times. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

I would also like to express the appreciation of my delegation to Ambassador Mya Than of Myanmar and the other members of his Bureau for the skilled manner in which they contributed to the success of last year's First Committee session.

Thailand would also like to associate itself with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) statement delivered by Myanmar.

Thailand joins the international community in expressing, in the strongest terms, our condemnation of the horrifying terrorist acts on 11 September. This tragedy has indeed united the international community with renewed strength and determination to fight international terrorism within the framework of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The incidents on 11 September are a wake-up call for all of us to re-examine the issue of international terrorism with a broader perspective. It would not be difficult to imagine how more horrifying the consequences would be if terrorists were to have access to nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The Secretary-General rightly reminded us of this in his statement to the General Assembly on 1 October. The close connections between international terrorism and the illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other deadly materials, and illegal arms trafficking, should be of concern to all of us. It is more important than ever that the international community redouble its efforts to give renewed vigour to the disarmament process, especially with regard to such weapons of mass destruction.

The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and their total elimination remain the ultimate aim of disarmament. The Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference was an important step forward in our efforts to achieve the twin goals of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We would like to remind the nuclear-weapon States of their unequivocal commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in accordance with article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Likewise, those States also have an obligation to transfer nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to non-nuclear-weapon States. Proliferation of nuclear weapons, and their possible acquisition by non-State actors, especially in light of international terrorism, as I mentioned earlier, are significant challenges that the international community needs to continue to address. There is no viable alternative to the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the safeguards within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is another important component in the global effort to promote nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We look forward to the convening of the Conference for Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date in order to inject greater vitality into the CTBT process. Thailand, for its part, is in the process of ratifying the CTBT. We call on other States which have not done so — particularly those States whose ratification is required to bring the Treaty into effect — to expedite their accession to and ratification of the Treaty.

At a time when there appears to be some lethargy about, or setback in, the nuclear disarmament process, concrete and practical confidence-building activities are called for. We thus urge the nuclear-weapon States to show their good faith with regard to their unequivocal commitment to nuclear disarmament through, inter alia, reducing the operational status of nuclear weapons and promoting greater transparency in nuclear-weapon capabilities. In this connection, we welcome the indications of further cuts in their nuclear arsenals by the United States and the Russian Federation.

Furthermore, Thailand also supports the initiative by the New Agenda Coalition, which has brought fresh impetus to the effort towards nuclear disarmament. We take note with great interest of the recent communiqué on this matter by the Coalition Foreign Ministers. We also reiterate our support for the Secretary-General's proposal to convene an international conference on ways to eliminate nuclear dangers, as well as for the early launching of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, with full participation by all Member States of the United Nations.

The effective functioning and expansion of nuclear-weapon-free zones can be, and have been, an important contribution to the global nuclear non-proliferation objective. It is for this reason that Thailand has consistently supported General Assembly

resolutions on nuclear-weapon-free zones. In South-East Asia, Thailand has always been an active proponent of the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and is the depositary State of the relevant treaty — the Bangkok Treaty. The Philippines having recently deposited its instrument of ratification of the Treaty with Thailand, all 10 ASEAN members are now fully participating in the Zone's Commission. We also recognize that the support of the nuclear-weapon States for the Treaty's Protocol is key to the Zone's effective functioning. We thus welcome the first-ever direct consultations between ASEAN and the nuclear-weapon States in May this year. We hope that they will eventually lead to the accession of the nuclear-weapon States to the Protocol to the Treaty.

As stipulated in the Treaty, activities on nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety and the safeguarding of nuclear material are to be implemented with reference to IAEA standards and guidelines. There have been a number of joint SEANWFZ/IAEA activities in the past years. The most recent one was a SEANWFZ/IAEA regional workshop on a strategic plan for radiation safety, held in Bangkok on 11 August this year.

Apart from nuclear weapons, we should pay equal attention to the other weapons of mass destruction — biological and/or chemical.

On biological weapons, as effective verification measures are an integral part of the effective functioning of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), we regret that the Ad Hoc Group on the draft composite text of the BWC Protocol failed to achieve a consensus and to adopt a final report of its work. We hope that this impasse can be resolved in the near future. It is in this spirit that we look forward to the Fifth Review Conference of the BWC in November.

On chemical weapons, Thailand hopes to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) by the end of this year. As an indication of our support for the CWC process, Thailand co-sponsored the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, adopted in September as resolution 55/283.

We cannot be oblivious to other conventional weapons, such as landmines and small arms and light weapons, which have indeed killed more innocent people than weapons of mass destruction.

On landmines, Thailand welcomes the results of the Third Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Managua, Nicaragua, from 18 to 21 September. We view that meeting as an important step forward in ultimately creating a mine-free world. The establishment of an implementation support unit, one of the key concrete achievements of the Meeting, would help facilitate the implementation of the Convention. Thailand is pleased to serve as co-Chairman of the intersessional Standing Committee of Experts on the General Status and Operation of the Convention, and through that role hopes to contribute to moving forward the Ottawa process. Furthermore, to promote greater understanding of the effects of landmines on their victims, Thailand will co-host a regional conference on mine victim assistance next month. We sincerely hope that, in the near future, Thailand, with the Cabinet's approval, will host a meeting of States parties.

On small arms and light weapons, we welcome the outcome of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York in July. Although the results of the Conference did not meet the expectations of all concerned, we believe that the resulting Programme of Action provides a good platform for an evolving process of enhanced international cooperation to tackle the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We hope that the international community will be actively involved in the follow-up to the Conference, and particularly in providing assistance to States with limited resources in implementing the Programme of Action.

We attach great importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating forum on general disarmament matters. We regret the ongoing deadlock in the Conference, which impacts the multilateral approaches on disarmament. In spite of the current situation, Thailand remains a strong supporter of the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament, of which we would like to be a member.

Finally, despite slow progress along many fronts, we should continue to reinforce the multilateral framework and reaffirm the spirit of multilateralism in meeting the challenge of disarmament. This requires more than good faith. It requires the political will of all nations, large or small, to turn swords into

ploughshares. This will allow States to devote resources and efforts productively to tackling the challenges of poverty and sustainable development, which will help mankind move one major step closer to a better and more secure future.

Mr. Al-Malki (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Given your wide-ranging experience and diplomatic skill, I am fully confident that you will conduct our deliberations at this session in an effective and competent manner. I am also pleased to convey, through you, my most sincere congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. I wish you every success in your work.

Allow me also to express my heartfelt condolences to the American people over the victims of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C.

The issue of disarmament and arms limitation — especially with regard to weapons of mass destruction, and nuclear weapons in particular — is a serious concern of the international community, because of the risks they pose and their implications for international peace and security as a whole. Despite the fact that the confrontation between the two super-Powers has come to an end, we continue to see a competition to possess ever more destructive weapons. That desire is greater now than ever before and represents a major goal of groups and States, a situation that causes great imbalance in the world and poses a risk to the very existence of the human race.

The great Powers must therefore supervise and control such efforts and nip in the bud the possibility of such weapons falling into the hands of groups or States that have no respect for human life. To meet the demands of the international community in this area, such States must also reduce their stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. In order to meet their defence needs, States must summon the political will necessary to reach equitable and balanced agreements that do not favour one party over another.

My delegation attaches great importance to the issue of peace and stability in the Middle East, which will be achieved only through confidence-building measures, mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and arms control measures intended to avoid imbalances in the region. Israel's possession of excessive quantities of weapons, its stupendous arsenal of highly destructive and unconventional weapons and its categorical refusal to place its nuclear installations under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards constitute a flagrant challenge to the international community. They also pose a serious threat to regional security in the Middle East, thereby jeopardizing international security as a whole.

My country closely monitors the daily tragedies Israel visits on defenceless civilians, as well as its use of its military machines, aircraft, tanks and missiles against Palestinian towns and villages. Its actions cause scores of injuries and deaths among innocent defenceless civilians whose only goal and aspiration is to enjoy peace and security on their territory, just like the rest of humankind. My country therefore calls for reason to prevail over force. In order to save the region from the vicious cycle of terrorism and violence, we call for an end to terrorist acts and the use of excessive force, for a return to the negotiating table and for Israel's full compliance with all its agreements with the Palestinian Authority.

The immense proliferation of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in the world is one of the main obstacles to human development, growth and construction. It is also a factor which compromises the security and stability of peoples and violates human rights and international laws. This trade is undoubtedly as dangerous as weapons of mass destruction, as it creates a threat to international peace and security. My country therefore participated in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held from 9 July to 20 July this year, which gave the international community an opportunity to adopt specific measures aimed at combating that international problem. We welcome the Programme of Action adopted by consensus at the Conference, as a first important step towards achieving the goal of preventing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Combating and putting an end to the danger posed by such weapons will be a first step towards ridding the world of other types of weapons.

My delegation cannot fail to express its appreciation and gratitude to the Chairman of the Conference, Ambassador Camilio Reyes, as well as to Ambassador Carlos dos Santos of Mozambique, the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, for their valuable and unstinting efforts, which contributed to

the success of the Conference. We also welcome the presidential statement on small arms issued by the Security Council on 31 August this year, as well as the role played by Colombia in this respect.

Landmines still pose a danger to the countries and the peoples of the world, obstruct the development and stability of affected States. My country therefore supports the efforts of the Secretary-General in calling on all States to accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, as well as to amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, so that they can achieve universality. Furthermore, my country supports continued action by the United Nations in working on a programme to eliminate mines and in helping the victims of mines, as well as implementing emergency plans in countries and areas affected by such mines.

The State of Bahrain has always fought terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It supports the efforts of the international community in combating terrorism as well as in investigating its causes and origins. At the same time, we reaffirm the need to protect the brotherly Muslim Afghani people, who should not be punished for acts that they did not commit.

We would also like to reaffirm here the importance of the inherent right of the Palestinian people to defend themselves and recover their territories. We must therefore distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate struggle by a people under the yoke of foreign control.

The goal of humanity remains to ensure that this planet can enjoy peace and stability. That is the aspiration of all the nations of the world in the new millennium. As this international Organization is the embodiment of that aspiration for international peace and security, the role of the United Nations in preventing conflict and disputes between peace-loving States increases day by day. Supporting the United Nations as it strives to fulfil its responsibilities in the world is, indeed, a safety valve for ensuring security for all the nations of the world.

Mr. Šahović (Yugoslavia): Before taking up the topic of our debate today, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this Committee. Your vast experience in the United Nations will certainly be an important asset, as well as a catalyst for the Committee's deliberations. In guiding them, you can count on the full support and positive contribution of the Yugoslav delegation. We also extend our congratulations to all the other members of the Bureau.

The current debate is taking place against the background of the horrific terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September, which reverberated throughout the world. The gruesome message they sent was that we are confronted with an enormous threat to international peace and security that calls for the establishment of a united front at all levels as the only effective means of eliminating terrorism. In order to achieve that goal, resolute, global, coordinated and persistent action by the international community is imperative. Such action should address not only the consequences of terrorism, which jeopardize the very foundations of international stability and security, but also the root causes of militant extremism, radicalism and violence. The United Nations should be the centre of such engagement. That also holds true for United Nations efforts in the fields of disarmament and the maintenance of international security.

In this connection, I would like to highlight one aspect which is particularly important: weapons of mass destruction. The possibility that terrorist groups may acquire weapons of mass destruction is real. If that came to pass, the consequences would be unimaginable. It is therefore necessary to significantly strengthen non-proliferation and control regimes for weapons of that type.

Furthermore, the importance of our collective engagement in countering threats of biological and toxin weapons cannot be emphasized enough. Additional action is also needed to reconfirm the determination of the international community to annihilate, once and for all, all chemical weapons, as envisaged in the Chemical Weapons Convention.

For its part, Yugoslavia is making a contribution to these and other related disarmament issues. Since last November, my country has joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We have also become parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Geneva Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons. In addition, we have

signed the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines; ratification is expected to take place soon. We are committed to fully implementing our obligations and are ready to participate in all initiatives to strengthen and further improve these international disarmament instruments in a constructive way.

Another disarmament topic, also connected to the problem of terrorism, deals with small arms and light weapons. We participated very actively in the United Nations Conference on this issue held in New York last July, and supported the Programme of Action adopted at the Conference. On the domestic front, we are in the process of reviewing and revising a number of regulations in order to strengthen control of the production and sale of and trade in these weapons. Also, we are actively engaged on this issue at the regional level, within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. The problem of the illicit trade in small arms in our region, and the related problems of transnational organized crime, trafficking in drugs and human beings and money laundering, call for a regional response, in which we are ready to participate very actively.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is firmly committed to the strengthening of regional stability and security, and, in this connection, to the promotion of regional cooperation. In order to achieve that, we must maintain and develop good-neighbourly relations, based on respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the equality of States, as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant documents of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. This is the first priority of Yugoslav foreign policy.

Yugoslavia continues to invest its best efforts in resolving the remaining problems that threaten the stability and security of the region. Unfortunately, the problems are very complex and not at all easy to tackle. In these efforts we find it important to cooperate closely, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), with the international community and its presences, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in Kosovo and Metohija. Yugoslavia believes that the time has come for the region to make a joint effort, together with other involved and interested international actors, to think through and address the future security framework for our part of the world in a thorough and comprehensive way. We shall not achieve much if we extinguish fire in one corner of the region and see it re-emerge in another.

In this connection, let me reiterate the importance of the Macedonian initiative concerning the maintenance of international security, good neighbourliness, stability and development in Southeastern Europe, which is under consideration in this Committee and which we fully support. As I have already mentioned, the development of stable relations among neighbour countries on the basis of mutual respect and cooperation is an important stepping stone in maintaining peace and building stability in Southeastern Europe and beyond.

The Chairman: I now call on the observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Renato Martino (Holy See): My delegation extends its congratulations on your election, Sir, as Chairman of this important Committee. Congratulations are also extended to the members of the Bureau. Through your able leadership and rich expertise and experience, I am sure that the proceedings of this Committee will be assured of a successful outcome.

On this occasion, allow me to express my sincere appreciation for the valuable contribution of the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, in matters concerning global disarmament and peace. It is contributions such as his that have indeed helped this Organization win the Nobel Peace Price this year.

We meet at a time of profound distress. The evil of terrorism has struck in unimaginable ways. The response of the world community to this act of terrorism demands leadership of the highest order.

First, those responsible must be apprehended and brought to justice through due process. This must be done in a way that does not expose even more innocent civilians to death and destruction. Violence added to violence will only lead to more violence. This is a time for wisdom and perseverance. Justice, not vengeance, must be our goal.

Pope John Paul II, on 13 September, in accepting the credentials of the new Ambassador of the United States to the Holy See, said, "In facing the challenges of the future, America is called to cherish and live out the deepest values of her national heritage: solidarity

and cooperation between peoples; respect for human rights; the justice that is the indispensable condition for authentic freedom and lasting peace." He thus expressed his prayer "that this inhuman act will awaken in the hearts of all the world's people a firm resolve to reject the ways of violence, to combat everything that sows hatred and division within the human family."

We do a disservice to those who have died in this tragedy if we fail to search out the causes. Here a broad canvas of political, economic, social, religious and cultural factors emerge. The common denominator of these factors is hate. This is a hate that transcends any one people or region. It is a hatred of humanity itself. This hatred kills even the one who hates. Acts of revenge will not cure such hatred. Rather, we must remove the most obvious elements that spawn the conditions for hatred and violence.

Though poverty is not by itself the cause of terrorism, we cannot successfully combat terrorism if we do not address the growing disparities between the rich and the poor. We must recognize that global disparity is fundamentally incompatible with global security. Poverty, along with other situations of marginalization that engulf the lives of so many of the world's people, including the denial of human dignity, the lack of respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, social dislocation, intolerable refugee situations, internal and external displacement and physical and psychological oppression, are breeding grounds just waiting to be exploited by terrorists.

In searching out the root causes of terrorism, we are in no way condoning terrorism. But any serious crime reduction effort cannot be confined only to intensified police work. Any serious campaign against terrorism needs to address the social, economic and political conditions that nurture the emergence of terrorism.

The most dramatic example of inequality is the growing gap between the rich and the poor. As we know, the North, containing a fifth of the world population, controls 80 per cent of the world's wealth and resources; the South, with four-fifths of world population, has only 20 per cent of the wealth and resources. This is not only unjust; it is a threat to the stability of the planet. It is the determination of the strong to maintain their position by whatever means necessary, whether military, financial or political, that is the basis for the systemic inequality in the world. A commitment to equity in the world is the only secure foundation for a more humane world order. Nations must work together to blunt current disparities and improve global stability. A continuation of the unjust status quo will inevitably continue fuelling conflicts and will lead to even more conflicts in the decades ahead.

There are conflicts today in several regions that do not even receive world attention. With their ease-of-use and ready availability, small arms are the weapons of choice for today's combatants. The supply of almost limitless quantities of small arms and light weapons through areas of high tension has fuelled numerous civil wars and social chaos. Small arms kill upwards of 10,000 people per week. Most of these victims are civilians.

Even after armed conflict has subsided, small arms often leave a culture of violence, which continues to contribute to much of the human misery and economic and social disruption in war-torn societies. As a result, international relief missions are being suspended more frequently as aid workers increasingly find themselves the targets of attacks. Consequently, civilians often suffer increased pain and are deprived longer.

To date, efforts to respond to this situation have resembled a loose web of initiatives with varying interests and objectives involving many countries and organizations.

Unlike in the effort to ban anti-personnel mines, no country has taken the lead on a comprehensive approach, and many States have only grudgingly engaged the issue. Given the international scope of the dilemma, the United Nations sought to build upon its history of dealing with the small-arms issue by holding a major meeting in July of this year to discuss concrete actions the international community could take.

The Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects has been attributed with various degrees of success and failure. In terms of success, 189 countries were able to agree on a Programme of Action that urges Governments to enact laws, regulations and administrative procedures to prevent illicit trafficking in small arms and to make the illegal manufacturing, possession, stockpiling and trade of these weapons a criminal offence. It was also decided that a review conference is to be held no later

than 2006 to examine progress in implementing the agreement, thereby ensuring that this would be the first step in what is expected to be a lengthy effort. The Conference has also been commended for placing a spotlight on the issue of small arms and providing an important platform for civil society and concerned Governments to press for serious action.

However, the success of the Conference was limited from the beginning, since it set out only to discuss the illegal aspects of the small arms trade. This focus has been criticized for ignoring the fact that most illicit weapons originate in the legal export market before being diverted. Moreover, the agreement that was reached is a non-binding, voluntary declaration with no enforcement mechanism, thereby raising the question of how seriously it will be taken by its signatories. Unfortunately, the Conference's final document did not include provisions that would have regulated civilian gun ownership and restricted arms transfers to legitimate States.

This past year also saw efforts to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention. A protocol had been drawn up to enforce the 1972 Convention, which would require signatory States to declare all industrial facilities capable of manufacturing biological weapons. The lack of full agreement to the protocol was another setback for the international cooperation that is so necessary to prevent terrorism. Combating the dangers of terrorist use of deadly organisms requires international institutions of arms control that are more credible than the present ones.

The tragedy of 11 September must compel us to sharpen our sense of urgency and to respond effectively to the dangers we face. Let us recall the words of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who said during the recent debate on terrorism in the General Assembly,

> "It is hard to imagine how the tragedy of 11 September could have been worse. Yet the truth is that a single attack involving a nuclear or biological weapon could have killed millions. While the world was unable to prevent the 11 September attacks, there is much we can do to help prevent future terrorist acts carried out with weapons of mass destruction. The greatest danger arises from a non-State group, or even an individual, acquiring and using a nuclear, biological, or chemical weapon. Such a weapon could be delivered without the need for any missile or any other sophisticated delivery system." (*A/56/PV.12*)

The Holy See has, in this Committee, frequently urged implementation of the obligations all States bear under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), obligations reinforced by the International Court of Justice. That obligation was expressed succinctly in the 2000 NPT Review Conference, in which all 187 signatories pledged an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We must now tackle the central problem of nuclear weapons, especially the mentality of those who possess them and claim that they are essential to security. Now is the time to dispel this claim and to declare that the continued possession of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is endangering all humanity and that they must be abolished.

With the Secretary-General, the Holy See calls for intensifying efforts to ensure the universality, verification and full implementation of key treaties relating to weapons of mass destruction, including those outlawing chemical and biological weapons and the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Special attention must be given to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The international Conference postponed as a result of the 11 September attacks must go ahead to ensure the entry into force of the Treaty. I am informed that the Conference will take place in November — a good decision.

Having signed the CTBT on 24 September 1996, the Holy See deposited its instrument of ratification on 18 July of this year. The Holy See, reiterating the firm conviction that "Nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the twenty-first century", (*A/C.1/52/PV.5, PV.15*) added,

> "the Holy See is convinced that, in the sphere of nuclear weapons, the banning of tests and of the further development of these weapons, disarmament and non-proliferation are closely linked and must be achieved as quickly as possible under effective international controls." (*A/C.1/51/PV.12, p. 9*)

Today, the Holy See adds its voice to the appeal to the States whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the treaty.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's Preparatory Commission has done commendable work in enabling the world community to have confidence that the CTBT will produce positive results. The Independent Commission on the Verifiability of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty provides assurance that the various scientific instruments and networks will be able to detect, locate and identify with high probability any deviation from the demands of the Treaty.

The continued success of the Non-Proliferation Treaty requires the entry into force of the CTBT. If the world is to stop the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, then the flow of the development of such weapons must be stauncheds at the source. A weakened NPT and an inoperable CTBT will force the world to continue wandering through a dangerous morass of tensions and recrimination. The security of all States will continue to be severely jeopardized.

The present course — more arms and more poverty — is leading us to human disasters even greater than that which we endured on 11 September. The basic requirements for the peace we seek are the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, the curbing of the arms trade and the eradication of massive, endemic poverty. We have no choice if humanity is to survive.

This distressing time must teach us that violence and war are not inevitable. An unavoidable clash of civilizations is not our fate. War and mass violence usually result from deliberate political decisions. Rather than intervening in violent conflicts after they have erupted and then engaging in post-conflict peace-building, it is more humane and more efficient to prevent such violence in the first place by addressing its roots. This is the essence of the approach to a culture of peace.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Israel to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Issacharoff (Israel): I am sorry to have to take the floor in the exercise of my delegation's right of reply, but the representative of Bahrain chose to devote his speech almost entirely to attacking my country. Indeed, it saddens me that the representative of Bahrain chose this opportunity to voice a number of false accusations in relation to Israel, particularly at a time when our region is so desperately in need of a more positive contribution to regional peace and stability. I would have thought that the representative would have better spent his time by outlining his own country's policies in this regard, rather than by maligning other countries.

I will not relate or add dignity to the representative of Bahrain's false accusations, but I would like to say that, if he stated towards the end of his speech that terror is to be condemned, except terror committed against Israel, then his statement itself is worthy of every condemnation.

There can be no justification for terror. Those who try to find ways to justify it, as the Bahraini representative did, will only ensure its perpetuation.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.